

# REPORT

## ON

# NATIVE PAPERS IN BENGAL

FOR THE

Week ending the 13th January 1900.

## CONTENTS.

	Page.		Page.
I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.		(h)—General—	
The proposed visit of the Shah of Persia to England ...	19	The release of the Natu brothers ...	24
England in the Transvaal war ...	ib.	The New Year's Day honours ...	ib.
The Transvaal war ...	ib.	Pensions to Bengali litterateurs ...	ib.
Greece and Turkey ...	20	The New Year's Day honours ...	ib.
Japan and Persia ...	21	The New Year's Day honours ...	ib.
Japan and Turkey ...	ib.	The New Year's Day honours ...	25
		The honours ...	ib.
II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.		III.—LEGISLATIVE.	
(a)—Police—		Nil.	
Swindlers in Calcutta ...	ib.	IV.—NATIVE STATES.	
(b)—Working of the Courts—		Nil.	
Two appointments in the Court of the District Judge of Backergunge ...	ib.	V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.	
Mr. Pennell's transfer ...	ib.	Lord Curzon's famine policy ...	ib.
Licenses for firearms in the Bhagalpur district ...	22	The Resolution of the Government of India on Famine relief ...	27
Mr. Pennell's transfer ...	ib.	Lord Curzon's Famine Resolution ...	ib.
(c)—Jails—		Lord Curzon's famine policy ...	ib.
Nil.		The Famine Circular ...	ib.
(d)—Education—		The famine ...	23
The Faridpur Zilla School ...	ib.	VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.	
(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration—		The Muhammadan Educational Conference ...	ib.
A hospital wanted at Sonamukhi, district Bankura ...	ib.	The Muhammadan Educational Conference ...	ib.
Fouling of the Damodar water in the Bankura district ...	ib.	The Englishman's charge of disloyalty against the Indian people ...	ib.
(f)—Questions affecting the land—		Treatment of Congress delegates by the Lucknow authorities ...	29
Nil.		Musalman's duty in connection with <i>Kafers</i> ...	ib.
(g)—Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation—		URIA PAPERS.	
Ferry boat inconvenience in Ulubaria district Howrah ...	ib.	The Viceroy on Brindaban ...	30
A suggestion for the Bengal-Nagpur Railway ...	ib.	Man-eaters in the Balasore district ...	ib.
Communications in Ulubaria as affected by the Bengal-Nagpur Railway ...	23	An appeal for the famished ...	ib.
The collisions on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway ...	ib.	Chaukidari assessment in the Jajpur subdivision of the Cuttack district ...	ib.
Railway complaints ...	ib.	English studies in Orissa ...	ib.
The new Tangail-Mymensingh road ...	ib.	ASSAM PAPERS.	
The proposed railway line between Dacca and Goalundo ...	ib.	Office attendance in Assam ...	ib.
		The clerks in the Cachar Settlement Office ...	ib.
		The Mishmi expedition ...	31
		The Sadiya tea-garden case ...	ib.
		The appointment of junior pleaders as <i>amins</i> ...	ib.
		Education in the Sylhet district ...	ib.



## I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.

*Al Punch* [Bankipore] of the 5th January writes as follows:—

The proposed visit of the Shah of Persia to England.

The Shah of Persia is expected to go to England by the first week of April next, but it is not known whether he is going by way of recreation or in obedience to a call from England. The British Government is of opinion that the Shah is willing to allow Russia to construct railways in his dominion, but this is not true. The *Times* publishes a telegram from Teheran, reporting that Russian engineers are already in the field, surveying the routes of the proposed railways. We do not understand why the Shah should conceal this fact. If he has really given Russia permission to construct railways, he should boldly say that permission has been given by him and that no one has the right to dispute his will. If he has not given any such permission, he should soon declare himself in favour of the British.

*AL PUNCH,*  
Jan. 5th, 1900.

2. The *Bangabandhu* [Chandernagore] of the 6th January has the following:—

England in the Transvaal war.

The proverbial 1899 has given a rude shock to the English as well as the Boers. "The shock of 1899" has passed into a proverb in Bengali, and its truth has been proved to the letter in the Transvaal war. When the war broke out the English expected to finish it by Christmas, but that hope has not been fulfilled. Brave English officers have been killed, English guns have been outranged by Boer guns, and the English have been defeated in many engagements. England, who had never before to call for colonial help, has now been compelled to gratefully accept that help, great or small. England, the mother of heroes, seems to be in want of heroes. This is certainly very strange. If we hear now that the British army has surrendered to the enemy we shall believe it, though at any other time it would be unworthy of belief. So disastrous, indeed, has the proverbial "shock of 1899" proved to the English!

*BANGABANDHU,*  
Jan. 6th, 1900.

3. The *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 6th January has the following:—

The Transvaal war.

The British Government has been placed in great difficulty in South Africa. The Boer war is causing us greater anxiety than it is causing to the Government. The three hundred millions of loyal Indians are sincerely praying for British victory. This has highly gratified our benevolent ruler, Lord Curzon. He has brought this striking expression of Indian loyalty to the notice of the Queen, and Her Majesty has expressed great satisfaction at it. The Viceroy has greatly pleased the Indian people by acquainting them with this expression of royal satisfaction.

*BANGAVASI,*  
Jan. 6th, 1900.

The Boers may show great courage and bravery, but we need not be anxious about the final result. It is reported that the Dutch of Cape Colony and Natal are joining the Boers. This is causing us some anxiety for the present, but only for the present. It will cause the Government no little difficulty if all the Dutch residents of the British Colonies in South Africa make common cause with the Boers. It is said that an additional 50,000 European troops must be sent to quell the Dutch rebels. Why not send Sikh, Gurkha and Purubia soldiers to keep the rebellious Dutch in check? There can be no objection to employing native troops against rebels. Let the Government consider this proposal.

Mr. Stead, the Editor of the *Review of Reviews*, has the reputation of a smart and fearless writer. But of late he has been abusing the British Government in his paper. He is extolling Boer bravery and, directly and indirectly, expressing satisfaction at Boer victory. A perusal of his writings leaves the impression on one's mind that he is glad at British defeats. It is suggested that Mr. Stead should be arrested. In our opinion, the Government of India should prohibit the circulation of the *Review of Reviews* in India.

Mr. Stead writes that since the outbreak of the war the British have been defeated by the Boers in all engagements excepting that at Elands Laagte, in which about 4,000 British troops were opposed to six hundred Boers. Mr. Stead evidently means to say that the British ought not to take any credit for this victory. But we do not agree with him. Again, were not the British troops victorious at Glencoe, although General Symons was killed? The

battles of Reitfontein, Belmont and Graspan—were not the British victorious in these?

Mr. Stead also accuses British troops of cruelty at Elands Laagte. He writes that the Boers were mercilessly killed and no quarter was shown. Two Boers, riding the same horse, were pierced with the bayonet by a British soldier, and the British troops are boasting of this cruel act. Mr. Stead does not stop here. He is trying his best to justify Boer treachery in showing the white flag. In Mr. Stead's opinion the British troops also are guilty of such treachery, and such small acts of irregularity are unavoidable in war. As for the practice of firing on the wounded, Mr. Stead says that the British are guilty of it no less than the Boers. In this and many other ways, Mr. Stead is justifying the conduct of the Boers. We think that Mr. Stead would have joined the Boers and fought on their side if he had the power to do so. To tell the truth, Mr. Stead's writings have exceedingly displeased us. The Government should prevent such poisonous writings from being circulated in this country.

A telegram from Ladysmith reached us the other day, reporting that the garrison there were in a position to hold out indefinitely, and that no one was likely to suffer on account of scarcity of food. Another telegram reached us a few days later to the effect that the food stock at Ladysmith was not likely to last for more than two months, and that scarcity of fodder was being already felt. This is most probably the more accurate report. If it is true that the troops have been living on half rations for a month, the food-stock may last the garrison another month or so. But how long can such a state of things last? Let Sir Redvers Buller advance at once. Let Ladysmith be relieved without further delay. It is urged by the British Press that Ladysmith could not have been thus invested if the British troops at that place had long-range guns in their possession. The Boers have purchased long-range guns from France and Germany and placed them on a high hill, whence they are bombarding the British camp. Is it not a regret that the Boers, who were said to have possessed no first-class guns, should thus take advantage of the British weakness? It appears that the Intelligence Department has not served the Government rightly and allowed itself to be misled by the Boers. If it had not been misled, the Ladysmith disaster could not have taken place.

The distress of the British troops at Ladysmith naturally moves one to tears. The soldiers are passing their days in kennels and burrows. This is the rainy season in Natal, and these holes are often filled with water. The suffering of the British troops is no doubt very great.

Mafeking also is in a sorry plight. The garrison is feeling the pinch of food and water scarcity. General French, however, has attacked and defeated the Boers near Colesberg. The Boers have been defeated in another engagement near Belmont. General Gatacre also has successfully repulsed a Boer attack. The *Englishman* thus comments on these British victories.

"Tactically the recent fighting may have been unimportant. We have no clear idea of the numbers that were engaged, and the casualties have not yet been reported. But, strategically, the British occupation of Colesberg ushers in a new stage of the campaign."

General Gatacre, it is said, is soon going to be reinforced with 20,000 troops. When he will advance on the Orange Free State with these troops at his back, who shall oppose him? General Joubert will then have to raise the siege of Ladysmith and run to the rescue of the Free State. Cronjé also will have to turn his attention to the Free State, leaving Lord Methuen free in his march for the relief of Kimberley.

HABULU MATEEN,  
Jan. 8th, 1900.

4. The *Hablul Mateen* [Calcutta] of the 8th January writes as follows:—

Greece and Turkey. According to the Turkish papers the defeat of Greece in the late war has convinced the Greeks of the strength and bravery of Turkish troops. They are now trying their best to court the friendship of Turkey and remain under her protection. By some means or other they are always endeavouring to win the love and favour of the Sultan. The Greek Government has conferred upon Batur Khan Pasha and Rafát Pasha the highest insignia of honour. The Pashas have been permitted by the Sultan to use these insignia of honour. This has puzzled many a wise head in Europe.

5. The same paper writes that there are Persian merchants in Japan, and there also exist trade relations between these two countries. Under these circumstances, it is desirable

HABUL MATEEN,  
Jan. 8th, 1900.

Japan and Persia. that there should be a Japanese Ambassador in Persia, and a Persian Ambassador in Japan. Persian youths, who go to England to learn arts and sciences, would do better to go to Japan for that purpose. The Japanese will gladly and eagerly educate them at much less cost. The Japanese have made some concessions to Indian students in this respect, and it is certain that they will make greater concessions to Persian students. The Persian Government appoints Europeans to some posts of responsibility in the State. It will be better to appoint educated Persians, or at least Japanese, to these posts, so that Persia may be free from European intrigue.

6. The same paper writes as follows:—

HABUL MATEEN.

Japan and Turkey. It is due to the policy of the Sultan that friendship has been cemented between Japan and Turkey. Japan was, of course, the first to court this friendship, but it has been matured solely through the Sultan's generous policy. Some time ago Japan sent an envoy with presents to the Sultan. Ahmad Pasha had these presents laid before His Majesty. The Japanese envoy had also with him a letter from the Japanese Parliament, but the contents of the letter are not known.

## II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

### (a)—Police.

7. The *Nava Yug* [Calcutta] of the 4th January has the following:—

NAVA YUG,  
Jan. 4th 1900.

Swindlers in Calcutta. Some time ago we wrote a letter to the Commissioner of Police about the activity of swindlers in Calcutta. These men have opened shops, which they call "Fancy Bazars," and cheat innocent mufassal people by drawing them to these shops. Failing to obtain any redress at the hands of the Police Commissioner, we have brought this matter to the notice of the Under-Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

A man is seen every day after dusk, selling valuable shawls, chogas and shawl comforters on the footpath to the west of the Beadon Garden. It is the same man who sells these articles very cheap every evening. He is never found selling these articles at day time.

### (b)—Working of the Courts.

8. The *Kasipur Nivasi* [Barisal] of the 29th December complains that

KASIPUR NIVASI,  
Dec. 29th, 1899.

Two appointments in the Court of the District Judge of Backergunge.

grave injustice has been done to the apprentices in the Court of the District Judge of Backergunge by appointing outsiders to two comparatively high posts in that Court. If it is the intention of Government to appoint educated outsiders to vacant posts, it will be better to enlist them as apprentices before giving them permanent appointments. The men appointed in the present case are two educated Musalmans. The Musalmans are, no doubt, backward in education, and therefore there can be no objection to a little favour being shown to them. But there is no doubt that one acquires experience in office work by serving for sometime as an apprentice.

9. The *Nava Yug* [Calcutta] of the 4th January has the following:—

NAVA YUG,  
Jan. 4th, 1900.

Mr. Pennell's transfer.

When Mr. Pennell was transferred to Noakhali, it was rumoured that his transfer was owing to his showing up in his judgment the arbitrary proceedings of the District Magistrate of Chapra in the Narsingh case. Those who set this rumour afloat now say that this is not true, and that Mr. Pennell's transfer to Noakhali had been settled before that case arose. Which of these statements are we to believe? If we had seen those officials punished, who were unfavourably criticised in Mr. Pennell's judgment, we might have thought that his transfer was not owing to his decision in the Narsingh case. And can anybody say whether the rumour that Mr. Pennell was not allowed to put up in any hotel in Calcutta on his way to Noakhali is true?

NAVA YUG,  
Jan. 4th, 1900.

10. The same paper has the following:—

Licenses for firearms in the Bhagalpur district.

The District Magistrate of Bhagalpur has rejected the application of the residents of that district praying for licences for keeping firearms. He did not, however, object to renew the licenses of those who had obtained licenses before. He has done right. So long as natives have fishknives, what necessity is there for other weapons? When it has become a matter of everyday occurrence for natives to die from rupture of the spleen caused by the kicks of the Europeans, what necessity have they for self-defence?

HITAVADI,  
Jan. 5th, 1900.

11. It is said, writes the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 5th January, that

Mr. Pennell's transfer.

Mr. Pennell has been transferred to a detestable place like Noakhali, not because he found fault with the Chapra executive. His transfer to Noakhali was ordered in ordinary course of business long before the Chapra incident. We are bound to accept this official explanation as gospel truth. But what has been done to those officials whose oppression and highhandedness were strongly criticised by Mr. Pennell? Will it not be a discredit to the Government if these officials are let off scot-free?

(d)—Education.

SANJAY,  
Jan. 5th 1900.

12. The *Sanjay* [Faridpur] of the 5th January complains that no time for

The Faridpur zilla school.

recreation is allowed to the boys of the Faridpur zilla school during school hours. Everybody can, therefore, imagine the bodily and mental strain which the boys suffer by being confined in a closed place for five long hours together. And, notwithstanding the orders of the Government, no arrangement exists in this school to teach drill to the boys.

(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.

BANKURA DARPAN,  
Jan. 8th, 1900.

13. A correspondent complains in the *Bankura Darpan* [Bankura] of the

A hospital wanted at Sonamukhi, district Bankura.

8th January that there is no hospital attached to the dispensary at Sonamukhi in the Bankura district. The absence of a hospital is causing great hardship to many patients who come to this place for treatment from the neighbouring villages. It has become extremely necessary to provide the patients at least with house accommodation, and the want of such accommodation is keenly felt by the Subdivisional Officer of Vishnupur.

BANKURA DARPAN.

14. The same paper complains of water scarcity in Telenda, Purunia,

Fouling of the Damodar water in the Bankura district.

Ramchandrapur, and other neighbouring villages in the Bankura district. These villages are on the Damodar. There is no tank in any of them, and their only source of water-supply is the river. But the Raniganj Paper Mill is fouling the water of the Damodar, by letting out the foul water of the mill into it. An enquiry ought to be made into this complaint.

(g)—Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.

ULUBARIA DARPAN,  
Dec. 15th, 1899.

15. The *Ulubaria Darpan* [Ulubaria] of the 15th December has the following:—

Ferryghat inconvenience in Ulubaria, district Howrah.

The boat traffic between Ulubaria and Bansberia and between Kultepara and Kantapukur is closed for the repair of the lock-gates and the re-excavation of the Midnapore canal. Passengers feel great inconvenience in getting into and getting down from boats in the ferry ghâts between Ulubaria and Bansberia. The public will be greatly benefited if some means is devised to remove this inconvenience. The branches of the trees on the southern side of the khal, which obstruct those carrying heavy loads, should be cut down.

ULUBARIA DARPAN.

16. The same paper has the following:—

A suggestion for the Bengal-Nagpur Railway.

Owing to the Midnapore canal being closed, the Midnapore line steamers of Messrs. Hoare, Miller & Co. have to go to Midnapore through Gaonkhali *via* Kola, and this causes inconvenience to passengers for Midnapore. The railway line from Nowpala to Ulubaria has been completed and ballast trains are running every day. It will be a paying business if the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Company make arrangements for running passenger trains

from Ulubaria to Nowpala. If an arrangement is made with Messrs. Hoare, Miller & Co. for crossing the Rupnarayan river, Midnapore passengers will catch the train from Ulubaria and reach Midnapore earlier than at present.

17. The same paper has the following:—

Communications in Ulubaria as affected by the Bengal-Nagpur Railway.

The high embankments of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway have passed across many village roads in the Ulubaria subdivision, but there are no level crossings on these roads for the convenience of foot passengers. The residents of many villages suffer great inconvenience on this account. This is owing to the Chairman of the Local Board, who does not know all the roads in the Ulubaria subdivision, sanctioning the Railway Company's plans of sites for level crossings. The Railway Company has also changed the direction of the public roads on the two sides of the Banspati khal so as to make them pass under the bridge over that khal. But as the bridge is only a few feet above the level of the road, it causes great inconvenience to those passengers carrying loads. This inconvenience can be removed by providing level crossings on the roads on both sides of this bridge.

18. The *Manbhum* [Purulia] of the 2nd January has the following:—

The collisions on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway.

On the 29th December last there were two collisions at the Anara and Adra stations, respectively, on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway. It is rumoured that there was loss of life. That many were seriously injured is certain. The authorities ought to enquire why and through whose negligence these accidents occurred. It is said that they were due to the negligence of the pointsman. But why such negligence on his part? We hear that the number of employes on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway is not proportionate to the amount of work they have to do. There is only one pointsman in each station, and he has to look after all the trains.

19. The *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 2nd January complains that passengers have to suffer great hardship and inconvenience at the Jagannathganj station on the

Railway complaints.

Assam-Bengal Railway. They arrive at the station by steamer at night, but neither the ferry ghât nor the road from that place to the station is lighted. The train leaves Jagannathganj at 4 A. M., but the station is not lighted even then. Steamer passengers, who have to take train at the Porabari station on the Eastern Bengal State Railway, have also to suffer great inconvenience. The steamer leaves the passengers on a *char*, and they have to cross the river at two places before they reach the station. This inconvenience can be removed by removing the station from Porabari to Ratandiya. But the Porabari Agent of the railway is a resident of that place and he is against the proposed removal.

20. A correspondent of the same paper complains that the construction of the new road from Tangail to Mymensingh has not been finished. The new road is shorter than the old one by ten or twelve miles. The construction of the section between Mymensingh and Dhalapara and that of the section between Dhalapara and Tangail have been finished, but the construction of the section between Bhukta and Dhalpara remains still unfinished. This is causing great hardship to the residents of these two villages. The construction of this section of the road will facilitate communication and increase traffic.

The new Tangail-Mymensingh road.

21. The *Dacca Prakash* [Dacca] of the 7th January has the following:—

The proposed railway line between Dacca and Goalundo.

The Government has applied to the District Board of Dacca for the acquisition of the Dacca-Goalundo road for the construction of a railway between those two places. If the railway is constructed along this road there will be a saving of cost and time. The District Board has resolved to demand three lakhs of rupees, the amount which was expended on the construction of the road. But as the greater portion of the road was constructed by the Government before the Road Cess Act came into operation, the District Board ought not to demand such a large amount from the Government. The road, moreover, has sunk in many places, and its value has, therefore, undergone depreciation. The District Board ought also to think that, in addition to

ULUBARIA DARPAN,  
Dec. 15th, 1899.

MANBHUM,  
Jan. 2nd, 1900.

CHARU MIHIR,  
Jan. 2nd, 1900.

CHARU MIHIR.

DACCA PRAKASH,  
Jan. 7th, 1900.

many other advantages which it will derive from the construction of the line, it will annually save Rs. 4,000, the sum it has to spend on the repair of this road.

(h)—General.

BASUMATI,  
Jan. 4th, 1900.

22. The *Basumati* [Calcutta] of the 4th January has the following:—

The release of the Natu brothers.

The Natu brothers have at last been unconditionally released. This is happy news both for us and Englishmen. We are happy because the doubt created in our mind that the all-powerful British Government could be so narrow-minded as to punish a man without trial has been removed. It is good for the Government because it has laid the whole Brahman community of the Deccan under an obligation by releasing these two Brahmans. It is good for both the Government and its subjects, if instead of keeping the subject-people down by a rigorous administration, Government endeavours to bind them to it with the golden chain of respect and gratitude. The author of this benevolent act is no other than our Viceroy, Lord Curzon. We do not know how to thank him. May God bless him and make him happy.

BASUMATI.

23. The same paper has the following:—

The New Year's Day honours.

A shower of titles fell as usual on New Year's day. This year the shower fell most copiously on Musalmans. This is good. For the more you manure the soil the larger will be the crop. Titles have come most stintedly to Bengalis. It is useless to pour water on the sandy soil. We are glad to see Pandit Kamakhya Nath Tarkabagis made a Mahamahopadhyaya and Rai Kalika Das Datta Bahadur, C.I.E. We are sorry to see Dr. Zahiruddin Ahmmad Khan made only Khan Saheb. The worthy doctor ought to have been made a Nawab. We would have been glad to see Justice Chandra Madhab Ghosh receive a title. There are few such Judges in the Calcutta High Court like Mr. Justice Chandra Madhab Ghosh. The honour which is conferred by Government should not go to the man who has no honourable place in society, and should not be too small for the honoured in society. Rasaldar Major Sahajada Ismail Khan has been made only a Khan Sahib, whilst the same title has been given to Hosain Khan, a mechanic in the Telegraph Department.

HITAVADI,  
Jan. 5th, 1900.

24. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 5th January writes that the Bengali public ought to be grateful to the Bengal Government for its promise to pay a pension of Rs. 50 to Babu Hem Chandra Banerji, and a pension of Rs. 25 to Babu Dines Chandra Sen. The public will never forget Sir John Woodburn's kindheartedness.

BANGAVASI,  
Jan. 6th, 1900.

25. The *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 6th January is glad that Rai Kalika Das Dutta Bahadur, the able Dewan of Cooch Behar, has been made a C.I.E., and Pandit Kamakhyanath Tarkabagis, the erudite Professor of the Sanskrit College, a Mahamahopadhyaya. It is also a great satisfaction to learn that Babus Hariram Goenka, Girish Chandra Chaudhuri, and Chandra Kumar Chatterji have been made Rai Bahadurs.

DACCA PRAKASH,  
Jan. 7th, 1900.

26. The *Dacca Prakash*, [Dacca] of the 7th January has the following:—  
The New Year's Day honours. We are sorry to see that no honours have been conferred this year on any one in the Dacca district. Raja Rajendra Narayan Rai, who is well known for his liberality, ought to have been made a Maharaja. Rai Kalika Das Datta Bahadur, under whose management the people of Cooch Behar have fared so ill, has been made a C. I. E.

SOM PRAKASH,  
Jan. 8th, 1900.

27. The *Som Prakash* [Calcutta] of the 8th January has the following:—  
The New Year's Day honours. The number of natives who have received honours this year is very small. Titles have fallen most copiously on Europeans. We are glad to see Pandit Kamakhya Nath Tarkabagis, Professor of Nyaya Philosophy in the Sanskrit College, Calcutta, made a Mahamahopadhyaya. The pandit is one of the greatest Nyaya scholars of the day, and has the reputation of a good professor of Nyaya Philosophy. He is in no way inferior to those who received the title of Mahamahopadhyaya before.

Kumar Manmatha Nath Mitra, Rai Bahadur, the grandson of the late Raja Digambar Mitra of Calcutta, who is well known for his public spirit and charity, ought to have been made a Raja Bahadur. He feeds more than 100 poor students in his house every day.

28. The *Bankura Darpan* [Bankura] of the 8th January writes that the New Year's Day honours have been conferred on deserving persons, and the honour's list is most likely to give satisfaction to all. It is a regret, however, that the names of Mr. Cotton, the Chief Commissioner of Assam, and Mr. James, the Commissioner of the Calcutta Police, have not found a place in the honour's list. The knighthood conferred on Mr. Justice Macpherson of the Calcutta High Court has given satisfaction to the public. "It will be noticed," writes the *Englishman* in connection with the honour's list, "that out of the 19 principal honours which have been bestowed, no less than six are given to native gentlemen. This fact is likely to give rise to some comment, as these decorations have hitherto been understood to be specially suitable for the recognition of the services of European gentlemen." The *Englishman's* remarks smack somewhat of partiality. The Viceroy's impartiality in the bestowal of honours has given the public great satisfaction.

BANKURA DARPAN,  
Jan. 8th, 1900.

29. The *Bharat Mitra* [Calcutta] of the 8th January is glad that Mian Devi Singh, Dewan of Pooncha in Kashmir, has been made a Rai Sahib. The able Dewan has introduced many reforms in the State, and he deserved a higher title than what has been conferred on him.

BHARAT MITRA,  
Jan. 8th, 1900.

It is also a matter of satisfaction that Babu Hari Ram Goenka has been made a Rai Bahadur. Hari Ram Babu was thanked by the Bengal Government for the services he rendered in connection with the plague in Calcutta.

#### V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE:

30. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 3rd January has the following:—  
Lord Curzon's famine policy. We have not the least doubt as to ultimate British victory in the Transvaal war, but the question which most powerfully exercises our minds is the policy which the British Government will follow in combating the present famine in India. On the first appearance of distress the noble-minded Lord Curzon made good arrangements for the granting of relief to the sufferers, but those arrangements, it appears, are no longer found adequate or effective. We have already expressed the opinion that the present system of granting relief to the labourers at the famine public works will not much longer meet the requirements of the case. The number of men and women on the relief works is daily increasing. Considering the number who are in receipt of relief at the present moment, it would require an expenditure of nearly seventy lakhs of rupees a month to feed these twenty-five lakhs of men every day. And yet this is but the beginning of the trouble, for worse days are yet to come. The Government is scrutinising the accounts of relief expenditure, and will doubtless devise measures for the protection of the exchequer, but those measures will not certainly be calculated to bring relief to the starving sufferers. In its circular letter of the 27th December last to the Governments of Bombay, the Punjab, &c., the Government of India points out the necessity of henceforward exercising greater discretion and rigour in admitting labourers to the relief works. An impression seems to exist in some quarters that even those who can support themselves or obtain support from others, flock as beggars to the relief works opened by Government, and that this has led to the large increase in the number of applicants for State relief. Now, it is needless to say that, except under the pinch of consuming hunger no one would care to present himself as a beggar at a relief-house accompanied by his wife and children. It is only when the body becomes weak and emaciated through starvation, when the child in the arms in agonising hunger looks up to its parents and cries restlessly for food, and when the parents find themselves powerless to give it food, that they feel forced to seek the last remedy of begging for food at a public relief house. If, under these circumstances, rigour or strictness is shown in the admission of the famine-stricken

SRI SRI VISHNU  
PRIYA-O-  
ANANDA BAZAR  
PATRIKA,  
Jan. 3rd, 1900.

to State relief, it will indeed be a difficult task to count the number of lives that will be lost in the famine.

Not full three years have elapsed since a fearful famine visited the country. Even the wealthy have not been yet able to completely recover their former position. And another dire famine has already made its appearance. Are the people, therefore, to blame because thousands are flocking to the relief works? Have they anything left in their houses? Even those that considered it a humiliation to beg for charity are now found labouring for their food on relief works with their wives and children. Government knows perfectly well that such is the case. It says:—

“All these circumstances make the Governor-General in Council reluctant to commit himself at all prematurely to the conclusion that the exceptionally large numbers on relief returned in the present famine mean that aid is being too freely given, and that tests and precautions are insufficiently observed.”

There would not have been much ground for apprehension if the Government of India had acted upon that view of the matter, and issued its circular simply to impress on the Local Governments the necessity of proceeding with greater circumspection. But a careful study of the document leads us to the conclusion that it is the fear that thousands of people who do not deserve State charity may be able to find subsistence in the Government relief works, and thus occasion waste of public funds that has really prompted the Government of India to issue the circular in which the most serious warning has been conveyed to the Local Governments in the mildest strain.

However elegant and sweet the language and sentiments of the circular may be, there cannot be the least doubt that in the end its effect will be baneful. The Local Governments will not act in accordance with the secret intentions of the Indian Government. The moment they read that “the assurance hitherto entertained as to the financial soundness of the famine relief system is thus gradually shaken, &c.,” or that “there is possibly a tendency to overlook this distinction, and to forget the limits within which State relief should be confined,” that very moment their former mental attitude will undergo a change. They will now perceive that a large number of admissions to state relief will have the effect of jeopardising the solvency of the exchequer. The outcome of all this will be that those who are really fit to receive relief—those, that is, who, if not relieved, would really die of starvation, together with their wives and children, will be denied State aid. What a difficult problem! Government itself says: “The difficulty is to discriminate between the really necessitous and those who can support themselves or obtain support from others.” Henceforward in many cases the really necessitous, who with their families expect to live for a few days with the help of the State, will be denied such help. Another point to be noted in this connection is that the system of home relief will very probably undergo considerable modification. Paragraph 5 of the circular shows that such relief will be materially restricted. We are really alarmed to think of the probable effect of this circular. There can be no doubt that the famine is daily increasing in intensity. The peasantry have been looking up to the sky and are now despondent. To whom will they look up now? Their cattle are gone. Nobody will grant them loans. Who will help them if not Government? We know perfectly well that nobody resorts to the public relief works except in utter helplessness, and a native of this country would sooner die of starvation than seek State relief of his own motion. Under these circumstances, the promulgation of this circular enjoining rigour and circumspection, although it may prove of service to the exchequer, will prove a powerful obstacle in the way of preventing deaths from starvation. As an illustration of the fact that the people of this country, however poor and famished they may be, do not readily resort to famine relief works, if they can help it, the writer refers to a criminal appeal recently made by the accused to the Bombay High Court from the decision of the Sessions Judge of Khandesh, sentencing her to transportation. The accused, a poor peasant woman, had been charged with attempting to commit culpable homicide and suicide. Her story was that, unable to procure food for her two children, herself and her husband, and after fasting for three days, and unwilling, through caste scruples, to beg or to resort to the State relief works, she threw herself with her two

children into a well. The children perished, but she was rescued and brought to trial.

31. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 4th January has the following with reference to the recent Resolution of the Government of India on famine relief:—

The Resolution of the Government of India on famine relief.

SANJIVANI,  
Jan. 4th, 1900.

The famine-stricken people on relief works had been so long receiving wages on the scale prescribed by the Famine Commission in 1880. But the Government of India now considers this scale too high. We do not for a moment doubt that Lord Curzon is actuated by a good motive in asking the Local Governments to reduce the scale of relief-work remuneration and to take care that relief is given only to the absolutely destitute. But there is reason to fear that the Resolution will have the effect of depriving many really destitute persons of help, and will make it impossible for those working on relief works to support their families with their small earnings. Lord Curzon has, after inspecting some of the famine-stricken places, reversed the decision arrived at by the Famine Commission in 1880 after mature deliberation. The Government of India has in the recent Resolution laid down the principle that the wage paid to a labourer shall not exceed the amount required for his bare subsistence, and the Famine Commission of 1897 was also of that opinion. But the prevailing distress in the Punjab is much severer than what prevailed in 1897, and as the Government will not pay more than what is required for the subsistence of the labourer, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab has called a meeting of the residents of Lahore and requested them to help the famine-stricken people in other ways. The Government will not even give rags to the famine-stricken people for their protection against cold. A perusal of the Resolution has really thrown us into great apprehension.

32. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 5th January writes as follows:—

Lord Curzon's famine Resolution.

HITAVADI,  
Jan. 5th, 1900.

In its recent famine Resolution the Government of India has expressed its anxiety at the rapid increase in the number of recipients of famine relief. The number has, within a few weeks, risen from twenty to twenty-three lakhs. It costs the Government fifty-six lakhs of rupees a month to feed twenty-three lakhs of people. The Government has, therefore, recommended economy in famine relief. It cannot be said that the Local Governments concerned have exceeded the scale of relief recommended by the Famine Commission—a scale of relief which no one has ever thought to be too high. If the scale of remuneration is reduced on the score of economy, most of the famine-stricken will have actually to starve. Those who come forward to beg Government help are utterly destitute people, and it will be an act of cruelty to reduce the scale of remuneration granted to them. Lord Curzon has already won the reputation of a good ruler. He has been anxious from the very first to relieve the famine-stricken. It is hoped that he will not allow the Government's desire for economy to interfere with the relieving of the distressed in an adequate manner.

33. Referring to the recent Famine Resolution of the Government of India,

Lord Curzon's famine policy.

BANGAVASI,  
Jan. 6th, 1900.

the *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 6th January says that it cannot blame Lord Curzon for the Resolution, but it fears that strict famine measures will aggravate the distress and may lead to the starvation of famine-stricken people. Lord Northbrook's famine policy was the best famine policy; in famine relief, waste is better than parsimony.

34. The *Bharat Mitra* [Calcutta] of the 8th January says that whatever

The Famine Circular.

BARAT MITRA,  
Jan. 8th, 1900.

Lord Curzon is doing to help the famine stricken people of India is highly praiseworthy, but it is feared that his new Famine Circular may prove the cause of many deaths from starvation. Government relief is sought only by those who cannot earn a living in any other way. It will be a regret if in giving relief to such people, the relief officers make strict enquiries as to whether they deserve relief or not. There is no doubt that this year famine in India will assume a serious aspect. To save the lives of the people at any cost is better than to save money at the sacrifice of their lives. It is to be hoped that this year the starving people will be granted relief, no matter whether they can work or not. A severe famine is staring the people of India in the face. It is the duty of the Government to save their lives at any cost.

BHABAT MITRA,  
Jan 8th, 1900.

35. The same paper has also the following on the same subject:—

The famine.

The happy land of India is becoming a land of misery and misfortune on account of famine. The Indians have not yet recovered from the misery which the last famine brought upon them. Many people have become street beggars, being unable to earn a living by honest labour. Their cattle have died, having had nothing to eat. Rain is badly wanted everywhere in India. The hope that there would be rain is changing into despair, and perhaps there will be no rain during the cold season. The prospects of the *rabi* crop, therefore, are very discouraging. This sad outlook has perplexed the Government. It is hesitating to give relief to the famine-stricken people. Death is staring them in the face. Many people, once happy and well-to-do, are eating what their domestic animals used to eat. But, alas! even such food is now growing scarce. The Indians are sure to be turned into houseless vagabonds, begging from door to door. Government intends to reduce the rate of relief. But there is no knowing what will be the fate of the famine-stricken people if its intention is carried into effect.

#### VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

CHARU MIHIR,  
Jan. 2nd, 1899.

36. The *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 2nd January writes as follows:—

The Muhammadan Educational Conference.

We are glad to see that the Musalmans have at last hit upon the right method of improving themselves. There are Musalmans who labour under the impression that official favour is the best incentive to improvement. It is a happy sign that this impression is being gradually weakened, and Musalmans are awakening to the fact that there will be no improvement if they cannot successfully compete with Hindus in education. The President of the Conference graphically described the benefits of education, and Sir John Woodburn advised the Musalmans to learn and practise self-help. The Lieutenant-Governor also cited instances to show what self-help was likely to achieve. During one of his tours, a Musalman Association applied to him for help in founding a hostel; he advised them to practise self-help before applying for Government help. Another Musalman Association, which had collected subscriptions for founding a hostel, applied for Government help, and the Government at once granted their prayer and gave them five thousand rupees.

At school Musalman students bear a very small proportion to Hindu students, and of these few Musalman students only a very small number acquit themselves creditably. Their habitual educational inactivity always stands in the way of their improvement, and it will be a great achievement if the Conference can remove this masterly inactivity. The proposal for the foundation of a separate Musalman University was not, however, well-advised. The Conference also supported Mr. Pedler's scheme of vernacular education. Mr. Pedler's object is commendable, but his scheme cannot be supported in its present form. The Conference, therefore, have done well to leave this matter entirely to the disposal of the Government. There can be no doubt, however, that the Muhammadan Conference will promote the cause of Musalman education.

SRI SRI VISHNU  
PRIYA-O-  
ANANDA BAZAR  
PATRIKA,  
Jan. 3rd, 1900.

37. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 3rd January has the following:—

The Muhammadan Educational Conference.

We have every sympathy with the object of the Muhammadan Educational Conference. The Musalmans are our neighbours, and the more education spreads among them the more shall we be pleased. Those who do not wish the good of their neighbours indirectly stand in the way of social progress. On the fourth day of its sitting the Lieutenant-Governor honoured the Conference with his presence.

HITAVADI,  
Jan. 5th, 1900.

38. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 5th January writes as follows:—

The *Englishman's* charge of disloyalty against the Indian people.

The *Englishman* in its forecast of the new year has given vent to its anti-native feeling. In its opinion the Indians are disloyal and anxious to overthrow the British rule. Our contemporary has poured a vial of poison,

and we do not feel inclined to quote its malicious remarks at length. But here is a passage to satisfy the reader's curiosity:—

"No Viceroy will leave a more permanent and abiding mark than he who by his acts and utterances gives the people to clearly understand that under no circumstances can India ever be anything but a fixed and integral part of Her Majesty's dominions."

The Indian people do not seek independence. It is well known to each and every Indian that were the English to leave this country to-day, to-morrow internecine quarrels would break out among the Indian people, and everything would be consumed in that wide conflagration. It is, therefore, not only unnatural but also impossible for the Indian people to desire the overthrow of the British Government. All that we want is justice and just rights. We pray for the fulfilment of the Queen's Proclamation to the letter, and we do not regard those as friends of the British Government who, either in speech or in action, violate its sanctity. We are the subjects of a Government, whose guiding principles are justice and equality, and who have set up before the world the highest ideal of impartiality. If it had not been so, if we had been the subjects of an arbitrary and self-willed Sovereign, we would not have prayed and agitated for justice and rights. We would have silently suffered all oppression and ill-treatment. The *Englishman* may try its best to prejudice the minds of the officials and mislead Lord Curzon, but it is our firm conviction that a man of Lord Curzon's sagacity and large-heartedness is not likely to be misled, and the *Englishman's* efforts to mislead him will be fruitless. The *Englishman* ought to remember how the Anglo-Indians opposed the Government during the Ilbert Bill controversy. Indians could never oppose the Government in that rancorous manner. Our loyalty is well known, and it will be admitted on all hands that those who suspect our loyalty are extremely mean-minded.

39. The same paper writes as follows:—

Treatment of Congress delegates by the Lucknow authorities.

Those who had gone to Lucknow to attend the Congress meetings from localities really stricken with the plague or suspected as such had to suffer great inconvenience. Among the Bengali delegates, those who had stayed in Calcutta even for a day or two were subjected to the operation of the plague rules. The plague rules, it appeared, were enforced only in the case of the Congress delegates and visitors. They were not allowed to enjoy that liberty which was enjoyed by people who had come from plague-stricken localities, but had nothing to do with the Congress. The segregation camp for the Congress delegates and visitors was set up on an open field at a distance from the town. There is practically no plague in Calcutta, still we were confined in the segregation camp as soon as we arrived at the town, and were not allowed to go to the town without a pass.

HITAVADI,  
Jan. 5th, 1900.

40. A correspondent of the *Hablul Mateen* [Calcutta] of the 8th January asks the Ulamas of Islam whether a Musalman can use anything prepared in the land of *Kafirs* in preference to anything prepared in the land of Islam. Some Ulamas have given the *fatwa* that the Muhammadan law does not allow a Musalman to use anything prepared by a *Kafir* if it can be had prepared by a Musalman. The Editor says that there is no doubt about the correctness of the *fatwa* given by the Ulamas of Persia. But the Persians, who are wanting in patriotism, are doing many things that are calculated to encourage and enrich *Kafirs* and weaken Islam in the land of Islam. O! Persians, be it known to you that your poverty, weakness and religious degradation, all owe their origin to the use of articles of foreign manufacture. European merchants who come to your country to enrich themselves are so patriotic that they do not spend a single farthing in buying goods manufactured in your land. They prefer their home-made sweetmeats, their home-made cheese, meat and wine, to those that are to be had in your country. It is a regret that the Persians do not understand their own position. It is a happy sign, however, that the Persians are now-a-days coming under the influence of the Ulamas. If they take steps with the consent of the Shah to prevent the importation of foreign goods into Persia, Persia will soon prosper like Japan. By God! the dried tea

Musalman's duty in connection with *Kafirs*.

HABLUL MATEEN,  
Jan. 8th, 1900.

which comes from Europe is surely unclean, but most of us do not know that. The late Hajji Mirza Hossain, a Persian dignitary, did not allow European tallow candles to be burned in the tomb of Islam Zamin because he knew that they contained unclean matter. You use European goods, perhaps because they look very beautiful in your eye. Where is your Islamic disgust with Kafirs? Where is your patriotism, which is a part and parcel of Islam? Where is your conscience? How long will you keep yourselves satisfied with this state of things? We refer the above question to the Ulamas and patriots of Persia for discussion. The *Habul Mateen* will be glad to publish such discussions. It is long since Persia fell into a sleep, and it will take her long to shake off her lethargy.

## URIYA PAPERS.

URIYA AND  
NAVASAMVAD,  
Dec. 20th, 1899.

41. The *Uriya and Navasamvad* [Balasore] of the 20th December is glad to learn that the speech of Lord Curzon regarding Brindaban has been very much appreciated by Hindus in all parts of India. The writer observes that the sympathetic tone of the speech reveals a deep sense of regard which His Excellency has towards all systems of faith, and a noble mind befitting the position of a Viceroy that strives to do justice to all creeds.

UTKALDIPKA,  
Dec. 30th, 1899.

42. The *Utkaldipika*, [Cuttack] of the 30th December is sorry to learn that man-eating tigers have killed many men and cattle in the Dantore village of the Nilgiri State in district Balasore, and that the Raja of Nilgiri has failed to check their depredations. The writer, therefore, advises the authorities to lose no time in taking effectual measures to put down the nuisance at an early date.

UTKALDIPKA.

43. The same paper advises the rich men of Orissa to follow the example of the benevolent *Marwarees* of Calcutta, who, under the leadership of Babu Gopal Rai Podar, collected a large sum of money for the relief of the poor and famished in Featepur and Ramnagar.

UTKALDIPKA.

44. The same paper recommends the complaints of the residents of the Jajpur subdivision, district Cuttack, against the *chaukidari* assessment and the appointment of members to the several *panchayats* in that subdivision to the notice of the local authorities, and suggests that the complaints should not be dismissed simply on the ground of limitation, if it is found out that the assessment is unjustly severe or not according to law, and that incompetent men, or men of objectionable character, have formed the members of many *panchayats*.

UTKALDIPKA.

45. Referring to the results of the last Middle English and Middle Vernacular scholarship examinations held in Orissa, the same paper points out the tendency of the rising generation to read English more and more day by day, which is noticeable not only in the districts of Orissa but also in the Tributary States of that division.

## ASSAM PAPERS.

SILCHAR,  
Dec. 31st, 1899.

46. The *Silchar* [Silchar] of the 31st December writes that Lord Curzon has no doubt understood that many of the European officials do office work at home. Some of the European Magistrates in Assam really do so. If they are pleased to come to office at all, they never come before 1 P.M. Following their example, many of the Native Magistrates too come to office at 1 or 2 P.M. There is nobody to look after them. The Viceroy has ordered his Secretaries to come to office regularly. Will not Mr. Cotton also enforce this rule in the case of the officials in Assam?

SILCHAR.

47. The same paper has the following:—  
The clerks in the Cachar Settlement office. The Cachar Settlement office was not closed during the Christmas holidays. Of course, it was not due to any fault on the part of the officials. The Settlement business cannot proceed if this office is closed during

holidays like other offices. The clerks in the Settlement office have to work very hard throughout the year. This office will be soon abolished, and the office employes will necessarily lose their posts. In 1893 the Chief Commissioner promised to give permanent posts to those clerks who would do good work in the Settlement office. But the Assam Government has not done justice to the head clerk of this office. The second clerk is now practically without any employment, after having served for 15 years in this department. There are also many who entered this office relying on the promise of the Government, but they will also lose their appointments with the abolition of the office. Many of them were not allowed to leave this office when they were offered permanent posts in other offices. We hope that the Chief Commissioner will redeem his promise and see that justice is done to these poor clerks.

48. The *Paridarsak* [Sylhet] of the 1st January writes as follows:—

The Mishmi Expedition.

It is feared that the quarrels with the hill tribes in the north-east of Assam will soon develop into a war. Mr. Cotton lately paid a visit to Sadiya, the remote frontier station, to personally supervise the arrangements made for the expedition which is soon to proceed to the frontier. In the meantime warlike preparations are in progress, and it is a great satisfaction that the Government has made excellent sanitary and medical arrangements for the coolies who are to accompany the expedition, and has given each of them a Cawnpore blanket. We have, however, no sympathy with these warlike preparations. For these preparations mean that the food of the starving Indian people will be turned into cannon balls. It is no doubt a duty of the Government to punish the enemy, but the performance of this duty often means a serious disturbance in the almost empty Indian exchequer.

We therefore request the Government to stop these warlike preparations—this attempt to destroy mosquitos with cannon balls. Famine has broken out in the Bombay Presidency before it has been freed from the clutches of the plague. At such a time as this it will not be wise policy to make warlike preparations.

49. The same paper regrets that the appeal of the Sadiya tea garden coolies

The Sadiya tea garden case.

against the decision of the Deputy Commissioner of Lakshimpur has been dismissed. There are two reasons why this decision of the higher Court has not satisfied the public. In the first place, it is impossible to believe that these poor, malaria-stricken coolies should have assaulted a European without grave provocation. In the second place, the Judge was not right in ignoring the plea of the accused, that they had used force only to defend the chastity of a cooly girl, a near relative of theirs, against the complainants' assault. "The assault committed (by the coolies)," says the Judge, "was a murderous one." Even if this be true, did this use of force exceed the limits of private defence? It is natural for a man to fly into a passion when he sees one assaulting a woman, and it is almost impossible to express how an Indian feels when he hears that a helpless cooly woman has been ravished by a powerful tea-planter.

50. The same paper writes that junior pleaders should be appointed as

The appointment of junior pleaders as *amins*.

*amins* in Sylhet. The existing *amins* are a standing stain on the administration of justice, and the sooner the new law regarding the appointment of *amins* is enforced in this district the better. The *Hitasadhini Sabha* has petitioned the Chief Commissioner for the introduction of the new law and the Sylhet public should back this petition.

51. The same paper has the following:—

Education in the Sylhet district.

In reply to the memorials praying for the increase of scholarships in the Surma Valley, the Chief Commissioner of Assam says that the memorialists have not been able to prove the soundness of their contention. In Mr. Cotton's opinion Sylhet is, for all intents and purposes, a Bengal district, and is on the same footing with districts like Mymensingh, Tippera and Noakhali, so far as education and material advancement are concerned. The number of scholarships in Sylhet is, according to the Chief Commissioner, comparatively much larger than in a Bengal district. To our mind, this view of the Chief

PARIDARSAK,  
Jan. 1st, 1900.

PARIDARSAK.

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PARIDARSAK.

Commissioner is erroneous. In education, Sylhet is far behind a Bengal district like Mymensingh or Tippera. We say this not because we do not appreciate what the Government has already done for our education, but because we believe that much more still remains to be done for the promotion of education in Sylhet.

The Government ought to pay a little more attention to Raja Giris Chandra Ray's Murari Chand College. The Raja is spending a good deal on this college, and the Government ought to see that it is placed on the same footing of efficiency with a Government college. The Government ought also to make provision for the permanency of the college. The Sylhet people will derive little benefit from the White Medical School. More medical scholarships are wanted to enable Sylhet students to avail themselves of the facilities for medical training offered by this school. There are many dispensaries in Sylhet, but very few of the Hospital Assistants are natives of that district.

The growing poverty of the country demands the opening of technical schools, and it is hoped that the Government will take up the question of technical education in right earnest. It is hoped that Mr. Cotton will open a technical school in Sylhet.

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,

*Bengali Translator.*

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,

*The 13th January, 1900.*